

HOPKINTON BUDGET COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2011

HOPKINTON TOWN HALL -approved

Members present: Janet Krzyzaniak, Chair; Tom O'Donnell, HVP Representative; Tim Carney, David Lancaster, David Luneau, School Board Representative; George Langwasser, Selectmen Representative; Mark Hemmerlein, CVP Representative; Karen Irwin, Neal Cass, Town Administrator; Michael Montore

1. Janet Krzyzaniak, Chair opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m. The meeting began with the review of the November 30, 2011 meeting minutes. David Luneau recommended an addition to these minutes then made the motion to accept the minutes as corrected. Michael Montore seconded the motion. All were in favor. Denise Damour will make the corrections to the minutes.
2. Vacant Budget Committee Seat: Mr. Lance Whitehead was in attendance this evening. His application was the only one the Budget Committee received for the vacant seat on the committee. Mr. Whitehead answered some questions concerning his ability to attend the Budget Committee meetings due to his daytime job. Mr. Whitehead will work out the conflicts to the best of his ability so that he may attend the Budget Committee meetings. Mark Hemmerlein made the motion to accept Mr. Whitehead's application. Tim Carney seconded the motion. Janet Krzyzaniak called for a vote. Seven members were in favor of Mr. Whitehead and 1 vote in the negative. Mr. Whitehead was accepted to the committee and sworn in by George Langwasser. Congratulations Mr. Whitehead! Neal Cass stated that Mr. Whitehead's seat will end in March when Town Voting takes place.
3. Town Budget Presentations:
Building and Grounds: Gregg Roberts and Neal Cass
The proposed 2012 budget for this department is \$236,634.00. This is a 3.56% increase over the 2011 budget. Increases in this budget are due mainly to wages and benefits, though not retirement. This is a simple budget that hasn't changed much over the past few years.

Transfer Station: Steve Clough and Neal Cass

The proposed 2012 budget for this department is \$547,199.00. This is a 2.41% increase over the 2011 budget. Increases in this budget are mostly due to wages which have been "under scale." Consequently, benefits increased as well. The Pay By Bag revenue is expected to be about \$100,000.00 by Town Meeting. This money goes into a special revenue fund that only at Town Meeting can the money be spent by the voters. The program is working.

Solid Waste: Steve Clough and Neal Cass

The proposed 2012 budget for this department is \$47,417.00. This is a decrease of -0.17% from the 2011 budget. This budget is independent from the Transfer Station. Engineering fees are down for this budget. All tests for the community well have passed. Continuation of these negative test results will bring more reductions for this department year after year (as long as there are no problems with the well.)

Sewer: Steve Clough and Neal Cass

The proposed 2012 budget for this department is \$96,976.00. This is a decrease of -7.40% from the 2011 budget. This budget is off set by the sewer fees. There are changes in wages and the benefits reflect these changes. Fuel has increased as it has across all budgets.

Highway Department: Neal Cass

This budget was produced by Hermi Blanchette before he left the department. The proposed 2012 budget for this department is \$565,184. This is a decrease of -1.688% from the 2011 budget. There is a decrease in overtime but it all depends on how much it snows this winter. Drug and Alcohol testing is up because it is required by the DOT that the employees are tested on a regular basis.

Highways and Streets: Neal Cass

The proposed 2012 budget for this department is \$610,000.00. This is a decrease of -3.48% from the 2011 budget. Recommended street work for 2012 is the reconstruction of Penacook Street (from the Contoocook Cemetery to the intersection at the top of the hill), top coating of Dustin Road and Spring Street, and culverts to be replaced. The town owns its own dirt pit thus saving money for gravel and sand. There are costs

for screening. In 2012 this department would like to take advantage of free software for Road Management. This software analyzes the roads that need to be redone. Information is entered and the software will give a baseline of what needs to be done. The selectmen are looking into re-instating a Road Committee.

Street Lighting: Neal Cass

The proposed 2012 budget for this department is \$2,160.00. This is an increase of 20.0% over the 2011 budget. The town owns 7 street lights which they pay \$180.00 per month for electricity.

Warrant Articles: Neal Cass

Articles for 2012:

- Police Radio Replacement - \$7000.00
- Replacement of Fire Vehicles - \$105,000.00
- Highway Replacement Vehicles - \$125,000.00
- Police Vehicle Replacement - \$25,000.00
- Town Hall Renovations - \$10,000.00
- Transfer Station Equipment - \$25,000.00
- Library Replac. of Building Systems - \$15,000.00
- Library Technology Trust Fund - \$5,000.00
- Library Building and Grounds - \$5,000.00
- Building Maintenance - \$20,000.00
- Ambulance Capital Reserve - \$50,000.00
- Fire Station Engineer - \$15,000.00

It has been recommended to build a new Fire Station. The current Fire Station cannot be changed (add a second floor) and parking is a big issue. The current fire station is in a flood zone.

4. Concerns or questions from the audience:

There were no concerns.

5. Other matters:

At the last Budget Committee meeting (November 30, 2011) the Budget Committee members made a recommendation that the Selectmen take another look at the vendors account for the Welfare Budget. At their December 5, 2011 meeting, the Selectmen voted to increase this line item from \$60,000.00 to \$70,000.00 based on current economic conditions and

the uncertainty of federal fuel costs. Also at the last Budget Committee meeting (November 30, 2011) the Conservation Commission proposed that their 2012 budget be \$250.00. At their December 5, 2011 meeting the Selectmen voted to keep this budget at \$1.00 and not to be increased to \$250.00. The Conservation Fund is substantial with addition funds being added this month from the 2011 Land Use Change Tax.

Karen Irwin requested to see the balances in the Reserve and Revolving Fund accounts. Neal Cass will have these numbers for the December 14 meeting. Karen also wanted to know if there are any loans the town could pay off early. Neal Cass and George Langwasser replied that the following loans could be paid off without penalty: Myron, Ransmeier, Sludge Bond and the community well. Karen also wanted to know how much money was in the Fund Balance. Neal Cass replied \$150,000.00. Karen Irwin asked about this because the Budget Committee has a policy that if there is a Fund Balance that it be used to reduce debt. Neal Cass will bring to the next meeting the interest percentage for these loans.

6. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made by David Lancaster and seconded by Karen Irwin. All were in favor. The Budget Committee adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise A. Damour